

**EUROPARC Federation
Council Meeting Minutes, 28th September 2014**

Location:	Killarney, Ireland			
Date:	Sunday, 28 ⁿ September 2014	Start :	9:00	End : 13:25
Attendees:	<p>Council Members Present: Thomas Hansson, Rolands Auziņš, Ignace Schops, Gábor Szilagyi, , Marian Jager-Wöltgens Co-opted Council members present: Eric Baird, Paulo Castro (Treasurer), Kaja Lotman (Nordic Baltic Section President – Section representative) Others present: Carol Ritchie (Director), Wilf Fenten (EUROPARC Consulting, minutes), David Cameron (Internal Auditor), Roger de Freitas (Internal Auditor candidate)</p>			
Apologies	Giampiero Sammuri, Dominique Leveque			

Agenda Item	Notes	Decisions Taken	Actions
1.	<p>Minutes of the Reims Council meeting and additional minutes.</p> <p>In relation to the minutes of the Reims Council meeting and according to the correspondence with the President, GSz has a minority report regarding the approval of the Strategy by the council as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the after conference meeting of the Council in 2013 in Debrecen it was decided that there will be an analysis of the workshop outcomes of the last 3-5 conferences, which could have been used for the development of the Strategy. Since then, in agreement with other Council members I have indicated the necessity of this analysis a couple of times, but, as far as I know, nothing happened in this subject, no such analysis was made. Concern expressed that not sufficient linkage between conference workshops strategic actions. 2. The drafting process did not ensure the full ownership of the Strategy by the Council. The process - as an annexed "Provisional timetable" - was formally approved along with the minutes of the Ay Council meeting. On the other hand I 	<p>The minutes of the previous Council meeting were approved as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p>This would be addressed in new strategy.</p>	<p>EB pointed out that any action arising from the meeting must be carefully listed in the Actions column.</p>

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	<p>strongly believe that there should have been time and possibility since the beginning of July to revise the process, but the proposals made for this revision were refused by the Director and the President.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Concern expressed that Council had insufficient opportunity to participate in strategy production. President and Director had taken the view that additional process would lead to unacceptable delay. 3. We have initiated the „Our future dialogue” movement clearly asking the membership to tell us their opinion and proposals regarding the governance of the Federation, with special respect to the role of Sections, and the related financial issues. The details of these topics were considered by the drafting team as ones which should not have a place in the Strategy. Due to this decision of the drafting team, only quite general, open ended statements cover these essential issues in the Strategy. This remarkable change from the „Our Future Dialogue” intentions and expectations to the final Strategy can hardly be explained by the Council at the GA. 4. The strategy outlines the process. However, for it to be effective, structural/organisational changes will need to be made. 5. Some of the „Outputs” (meetings, workshops, etc.) in column 3 of the table are still not real outputs, but tools in order to reach the outcomes. 6. It is essential to distinguish between outputs and outcomes. 		
<p>2.</p>	<p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more realistic budget has been prepared and is part of the Director’s report. 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suggestions by DC that appropriate project proposals should be handed over to EUROPARC Consulting had been agreed and will happen in future as it had already happened in the past. • Consultation with lawyers regarding options for appointing additional Council members: The Director explained that she had already explained to the Council the legal situation and sent an email to Council to that effect and clarified the role of sections who if they wish and can, to become members of the federation. Some legal clarification will be necessary although most of it is already clear, such as membership of Sections that are properly constituted. GSz in agreement with IS has indicated that it would increase the existing confusion of the position of Section in the Federation if they were allowed to be members of the organization. Important to take account of constitutional position of the Sections. 		<p>Action moving forward is for the Directorate to develop proposals changes to the Statutes regarding further representations by the Sections on the Council.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Treasurer´s report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 Italian parks have now paid their membership fees bringing the current state of fees to the usual average. • The NGO grant has been paid. • Reserves are still being reduced so that changes may be required such as reducing the level of services being provided. Or some members could form a region and pay less but at least pay (new membership structure?). Start a process of recruiting new members? • The process of striking off non-paying members takes 2 years which means that the budget is inflated by a long time. Another 	<p>It was decided that the Directorate in conjunction with the Treasurer bring to a future Council meeting some proposals for a revised membership structure, including new membership categories. Also, the Directorate and Treasurer to draw up a clear specification for the next</p>	<p>The Director and Treasurer to bring to a future Council some proposals for a revised membership structure, including new membership categories. The Directorate and Treasurer to draw up a clear specification for the next Council meeting on</p>

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	<p>problem is people not paying for a while and then re-joining, not having paid for 2 years.</p>	<p>Council meeting on membership fees, structure and recruitment for Council members with identifiable outcomes, for Council members to give feedback within a week.</p> <p>The outgoing Council recommends to the new Council that it should take a decision prior to next year as to what percentage of the budget/level of fee income is appropriate (for internal use, such as 70% or 75%).</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>membership fees, structure and recruitment and recruitment for Council members to report within a week.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Membership report The Federation is losing members every year due to strike-off rules. New admissions tend to balance with resignations. One part of new members are Charter candidates. We are receiving around 85% of invoiced membership fees and getting every year less total income.</p>	<p>The report was noted. The resignations were noted and accepted, new members were welcomed.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Directorate report The Director presented the paper to the Council and thanked the outgoing Council members for their work over the last Council period. An appendix of Council business was appended to the report.</p> <p>An application to BfN for an international project is also in preparation on the theme of benchmarking and PAME. That was</p>		

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	<p>outlined in the paper, could be another option. In future, the Council could look to working with universities and explore new options which must include networking opportunities apart from the General Assembly business. For 2016 the outlook for a conference in Switzerland is promising and the Council was eager that the current proposal should be accepted.</p>	<p>Council followed his advice and decided the 2015 conference/ General Assembly should take place in October 2015 in Regensburg as per options laid out in the Director's paper. Option 1 is currently preferred.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Feedback from President and Council members on EUROPARC representation Members of the Council have been involved in various activities including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IS reporting on meetings in Brussels concerning the Sydney Conference. • RA took an active part in the consultation process undertook a transboundary evaluation visit to Julian Alps and attended the transparcnet meet and transboundary meeting in Finland. Announced next TPN meet will be in Bayerischer Wald in June on the theme of ecosystem services. • KL reported on progress in the Nordic Baltic Section and her liaison with the CZ Section. The new presidency will be taken over by Lithuania. The Section is trying to get to grips with the new Strategy so that it can be better involved. It will also foster closer cooperation between it and other Sections. • GS was active in the Strategy drafting process and hopes that his interventions served to strengthen the draft. A new Section is about to be formed by members from AU CZ HU SK – Central and East European Section. Other countries are invited to join. The Junior Ranger event was successfully completed • MWJ has been also involved in the Strategy drafting process 	<p>Verbal reports</p>	

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<p>where she had tried to address points that she felt were missing. Dutch colleagues were, on the whole, pleased with the new Strategy but will want to address certain topics during the General Assembly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EB felt that more time is needed to be taken out for reflection rather than just reacting. Working Groups are working well but will need a more precise brief to work to. A scientific piece of work to find out underlying principles for protected areas would be important for the future, perhaps to be implemented by EUROPARC Consulting. MacCauley Development Trust worked with Hutton Institute and EUROPARC in current research project but disappointed at the low uptake from EUROPARC members.• PC has been very much involved in the Strategy and his work for possible Charter park applications for the future. Visit to Spain highlighted the difficulties of impending re-evaluations. Carried out lobbying about key issues concerning Parts II and III of the Charter and worked for further recognition of the Charter. 2015 could be a crucial year.• TH attended the Transparcnet meeting in St Amand Les Eaux, successfully organized by The Directorate (Petra Schultheiß) and the Transboundary parc Hainaut meeting. Other meetings presented excellent opportunities for networking. In June he attended a meeting in Brussels organized by the Commission to together with Farmers, Hunters and Nature Conservation organisations sign a document for the creation of a platform concerning Coexistence with people and large carnivores.• Feedback from Working Groups: The STWG has been actively involved in the Charter progress and discussed some of the financial issues regarding the financial sustainability of the Charter. The Transboundary WG is working on various		<p>Macaulay Lecture: post link to this.</p>
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	documents trying to rework the current documents and is trying to work on a common transboundary project.		
7.	<p>EUROPARC Consulting report</p> <p>The <i>Geschäftsführer</i> presented his report and pointed out that the last 15 months have been the most difficult ever for EUROPARC Consulting. As larger projects have lead times of between 6 to 8 months there is no prospect of drastic changes in the short term. However, more tenders and proposals than ever are being submitted and it could just be that one or two medium-size contracts could improve the situation significantly. A lot of work has also been invested in preparing joint proposals with outside organisations. The Charter remains a crucial part of our work. Without it we would have been hard pushed to keep going. Careful cash flow management is currently crucial to the company's future success.</p> <p>The question of competition was raised by PC saying better communications was needed across the Federation and a more strategic plan for consulting and federation. Preparation of Life project was a case in point that Consulting could develop and promote its expertise across Federation to undertake on behalf of members.</p>	Council noted report.	
8.	<p>Internal Auditor's report</p> <p>The Internal Auditor presented his report with clear recommendations. It would be helpful to have initial reactions by the current Council and hand them to the incoming Council.</p> <p>Re. Recommendation 1: It would make decision-making clearer if the Directorate and the President came forward with clear</p>	The Council agrees with this	Council to annually review the

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<p>recommendation and considered options for the Council who then can take a concrete decision.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 2</u>: The Council accepted that the Council and Directorate should consider the current arrangements for considering financial monitoring and seek to identify whether improvements in arrangements could be made.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 3</u>: Council agrees that papers are now much clearer but it is important that, once a format has been agreed, it should be adhered to for the sake of continuity. It would also be useful to consider a review of the roles and responsibilities of Council, President, Council members and Director to help establish a formal scheme of delegation identifying which parts of the Federation has responsibility for undertaking key activities and decision-making.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 4</u>: On the basis of the review of responsibilities, the Council should carefully consider the appropriate schedule for its meetings to ensure that Council input is focused at the right times in the Federation's Governance calendar.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 5</u>: Council should consider establishing a skills framework to identify the range of knowledge and skills needed to support the Council in its decision-making, highlight any gaps not covered through the skill sets and experience brought by Council members, and consider seeking voluntary advisors or co-opted members to ensure the appropriate range of knowledge and advice</p>	<p>recommendation and would like this to be implemented.</p> <p>The Council agrees with this recommendation and would like this to be implemented and advises the use of somebody from the outside to help with the formulation of these proposals.</p> <p>Council accepted Recommendation 3, 4 5 and added that the Council should take more time to have an annual review of its performance.</p>	<p>actions from the Internal auditor</p>
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<p>is brought to support effective governance and good decision making by Council members.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 6</u>: Council should review its role and the role of individual members with a view to consider whether there would be benefit in having individual members take a lead role on specific subject areas, either as spokespeople for subjects and/or as leaders of specific priority work streams.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 7</u>: the Council President should issue a communiqué following each Council meeting to the Federation membership to help make the work of the Council more visible to members and to also help members understand the work that Council members undertake on their behalf.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 8</u>: The Council should consider taking forward work on the role for Sections in the delivery of the Federation's Strategy. The Council should consider establishing a clear role and set of agreements between the Council and the Sections to more formally embody the place of Sections in the delivery of the Federation's strategic objectives and benefits to members.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 9</u>: The Council and Directorate should review the standard terms of reference and conditions for admission of a Section as part of the EUROPARC Federation.</p> <p>Re. <u>Recommendation 10</u>: The Council and Directorate should seek confirmation from EUROPARC Sections of compliance with these terms and conditions to ensure it is satisfied with the levels of governance in Sections and the involvement of these sections in the</p>	<p>In addition to accepting Recommendations 6 and 7, the new Council should consider, in line with the idea of delegation expressed in the Recommendations, the formation of see a Standing Committee/Audit Committee (see also decision on Recommendation 3 regarding performance review).</p> <p>The Council accepted this recommendation and the Internal Auditors advice to include EUROPARC Consulting in this.</p>	<p>The President and Director to prepare a timeline for the recommendation to be negotiated and to be implemented.</p>
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	<p>governance of the Federation.</p> <p>Sections fall into two Sections as not all are fully legally constituted organisations but should be fully integrated into the Federation. Making all of them members of the Federation would not solve the problem. There is also a growing problem that some members of Sections are currently not members of the Federation.</p> <p>7a Report on EUROPARC Consulting relations The Internal Auditor highlighted one of his recommendations about the control of the trading arm by its owner. It may be complicated and possibly not the highest priority but it should be tackled. DC also commented that his final recommendation that the current governance of EC is in his opinion not suitable to the Federation needed further consideration.</p>	<p>The Council agrees with 9 and 10 but there are additional problems/challenges to be solved.</p> <p>The Council noted the report.</p>	<p>Talks to start with Directorate and Section on actions from the Strategy</p> <p>The Internal Auditor's report to be taken forward, perhaps in form of a joint meeting with sections for the President and Director to propose a timeline for taking forward the report</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>GA/Conference procedures The Opening Ceremony will take place tonight, starting at 7 pm in the Malton Hotel.</p> <p>Monday: Start at 8.30 am. Morning session as per programme, plenary session to end by 12.30. Afternoon start at 2 pm.</p>		
<p>10.</p>	<p>The President thanked all for their attendance.</p>		